

□ 2015

RECOGNIZING FIVE CITIZENS FROM MARYLAND FOR THEIR FINE SERVICE TO OUR NATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CANTOR). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. GILCREST) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GILCREST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call my colleagues' attention to the fine service to our Nation by five citizens from my Maryland Congressional district: Mr. John Williams of Elkton, Mr. Richard Noennich of Elkton, Mr. William Jeanes of Earleville, Mr. Donald H. Burton of Chesapeake City, and Mr. Emmett Duke of Chestertown.

Very often we go on with our busy lives and forget that every day our government is making decisions and plans that will affect our health, our lives and our future. Every day so many of us take for granted that someone else will take up the causes for which we care and serve as the watchdog over our Federal institutions. Often we are too busy to get involved and our government moves ahead without critical oversight from the people, leaving accountability to be sacrificed on the altar of convenience.

More than 4 years ago our government, emboldened by the neglect of its elected leaders, was determined to move forward on a public works project in Maryland to deepen the Chesapeake and Delaware canal that connected the Delaware River to the Chesapeake Bay. This particular project was both a disservice to the taxpayers and a sin to our fragile Chesapeake Bay. A proposal to spend over \$100 million on this wasteful and unnecessary project was never challenged. Yet five men from opposite corners of the community and separate walks of life met by chance and formed an alliance in the name of injecting honesty and integrity into an intimidating government review process. Led by the guiding principle of truth and a commitment to public service, these patriots faced the air of entrenched special interest with little outside support and ultimately triumphed in their efforts.

After enduring years of ridicule by editorial writers, being stonewalled by government bureaucrats and marginalized by many of their own elected officials, they were recently vindicated in their work by the rightful collapse of the project when the Corps of Engineers finally recognized that they were correct in their assumptions.

Throughout the entire experience, these five men did not forget that one thing that makes America so strong, that democracy only works when citizens stay involved. These five citizens committed thousands of hours and thousands of dollars to making sure that our institutions of government stay committed to the principles of democracy, that our government of the

people, and by the people remain truly for the people. Long after many of us would have withdrawn in frustration and moved on, they never lost their sense of optimism about our system of government.

Mr. Speaker, I commend them for this optimism. I commend their perseverance, and I commend the example they set for our children and grandchildren.

In his recent inaugural address, our new President reminded us sometimes in life we are called to do great things, but every day we are called to do small things with great love. These five patriots showed that in the small things they did every day and the great accomplishment that resulted, they showed great love for their community and our country.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking John Williams, Richard Noennich, Bill Jeanes, Don Burton and Emmett Duke for their service to our nation.

Ralph Waldo Emerson said in his essay more than a hundred years ago, Self-reliance, "There is no peace without the triumph of principles." These men epitomize that statement.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. BACA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BACA addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. OWENS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan (Ms. KILPATRICK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. KILPATRICK addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

CLOSE THE GUN SHOW LOOPHOLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I hope that the Congress was awake today when there was another shooting, making two shootings in a week, yesterday California at a public school, two dead, 13 injured; today a Catholic school. It appears that there is one injury.

I am not sure if it takes these shootings to get congressional attention. I do give considerable credit to Senator MCCAIN and Senator LIEBERMAN who have been trying to close the gun gap since this Congress began, that is the

gap that we left open at the end of the 106th Congress in spite of Colombine.

The Million Moms are still organizing at the grass roots. Members should be wary of letting another year go by of shootings and no action. I will have a Mother's Day resolution on the floor and I challenge the Congress to close the loophole before that resolution and before Mother's Day. We have come so very close and we must ask ourselves what advantage is it to us and our constituents to give an advantage to gun shows over licensed dealers in our district? Why should licensed dealers not get the respect, they who pay taxes, over gun shows who go without the same regulations; and why oppose closing the loophole when 90 percent would pass instantly. This is a question of congressional will.

I do not pretend that this is any panacea any more than the Brady Bill was, but everybody now knows what a considerable difference the Brady Bill made. It is some important difference that closing the loophole would make, and surely today we would recognize that with all of the rhetoric about protecting our children. This much we can do. We can close that loophole.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to lay the second amendment argument to rest once and more all. The Constitution does not bar reasonable regulation of gun ownership. How do I know that? In the District of Columbia and all over the United States, there are laws that forbid handguns altogether. Those laws were challenged decades ago and found constitutional. Why in the face of the fact that cities and localities regularly regulate guns do we hear constitutional arguments against closing the loophole. We need a national law. It is not good enough to have a law in New York and Atlanta and the District of Columbia because guns travel by interstate commerce like people, they travel on people and they travel in cars.

We must not wait for the next shooting because we know it will come, and it may even come if we close the loophole. But to the extent that we save the life of one child, and there are two dead tonight, by a law that closes the gun show loophole, we shall have done what was necessary for Members of Congress to do.

Mr. Speaker, I ask this body to act now, act before Mother's Day.

36-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF MARCH ACROSS EDMUND PETTUS BRIDGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, my colleagues see on the floor of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) and the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. HILLIARD).

Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening on a day of a very special and heroic event. In fact, I am somewhat overwhelmed because this has been a particularly